the Central Voice

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< Your very own personal
CENTRAL PA PRIDE GUIDE

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ANALYSIS:

Understanding our allies

By Tesla Taliaferro

Some people are allies to the LGBTQ+ community based on a personal experience. Like a gay family member or loved one. Others are allies because they believe love is universal, identity is uniquely personal, and that neither the government nor people outside a loving relationship should have the ability to infringe upon that love or identity.

As LGBTQ+ individuals, we should remember to be our own allies, not only to our particular part of the alphabet, but to all of our siblings across the rainbow spectrum.

This story focuses on the voices of a few of our allies. Our goal is to better understand them and to know what drives their support for us. Hopefully, this will lead the region's LGBTQ+ community to best utilize their voices and experiences to further our own social justice goals.

Matthew Shineman

As Director of Lifespan Religious Education at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York, the reason for Matthew Shineman's alliance is twofold. First, his experience with the queer community through high school and college. Second, Shineman's religious beliefs as a Christian-leaning Unitarian Universalist.

> **"...it was not just about standing up for my friends, but doing the right thing."**
>
> - Matthew Shineman, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

As a participant in school theater, Shineman found himself with many queer friends and also on occasion, the target of homophobic slurs. These experiences and relationships helped him to recognize his own privilege.

"As a white, heterosexual, cisgendered male, I struggled initially on how to use my privilege," Shineman explains. "I realized that it was not just about standing up for my friends, but doing the right thing."

Please see **ALLIES**, page **29**

Sick of corporations and cops:

NYC LGBTQ ACTIVISTS 'RECLAIM PRIDE'

By Winnie McCroy
The Central Voice NYC Correspondent

Editor's note – The 50th anniversary of Stonewall brought to the city in which the storied and debated event took place three main venues – the usual late June march that organically sprung up one year after the uprising, World Pride (a Central Voice advertiser), and an alternative event organized by a diverse coalition, including, among others, Rise and Remand, Democratic Socialists of America, and Jewish Voice for Peace NY and ACT UP veteran Ann Northrop. Central Voice NYC Correspondent Winnie McCroy unties a knotty narrative by checking in with Northrop, Michael Musto, and transwoman Robin Scott who donated her professional time by designing posters.

With the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, this year's Pride celebrations are being ramped up. In New York City, the influx of tourists for WorldPride 2019, hosted by Heritage of Pride (HOP), has prompted activists to present an alternative: The Queer Liberation March. The Reclaim Pride Coalition (RPC), comprised of 100 organizations and thousands of individuals, planned their own June 30th march—one they feel is more in keeping with our communities' tradition of resistance against police, state and societal oppression.

"We want to be a Pride March for the people," said RPC organizer Ann Northrop. "Everyone can march freely and openly, with no contingents or order of march, just a freeform parade of people expressing themselves with signs and banners."

Northrop held firm to the mandate against corporate floats and uniformed police officers, saying early into the planning process "they never apologized for Stonewall or the countless things they have done to our community since."

On June 6, NYPD issued an apology to which Reclaim Pride Coalition responded: "We are not impressed by Commissioner O'Neill's empty apology, given under pressure during Pride

Please see **RECLAIM PRIDE**, page **9**

FAMILY, THE BIRTH OF SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

At the new Women and Babies Center at UPMC Pinnacle, your baby will receive the highest level of specialized care in our Level III, high-volume NICU. Our state-of-the-art center offers the only NICU in the area with private rooms, allowing you to stay overnight and keep your little one close.

At the new Women and Babies Center, family comes first.

Learn more about our new center at **UPMCPinnacle.com/Family**.

UPMC | PINNACLE HARRISBURG

INTERNATIONAL

| PHOTO: @GEEFRE/TWITTER

BELGIUM

POLICE USED TEAR GAS ON PROTESTERS

Pride celebrations took over Brussels May 18 for the annual Belgian Pride reports Stefania Sarrubba for GayStarNews. A 100,000-strong crowd flocked to the capital of Belgium to take part in the 24th annual parade. According to media reports, a group of 40 people tried to block the parade from going ahead. They were holding banners reading 'Reclaim the Pride'. Protesters were complaining about the presence of police officers at Pride. As the group tried to reenter the parade, police used tear gas and pepper spray on them.

WORLDWIDE

NETWORK SAVES QUEER CITIZENS FROM HOSTILE GOVT.

For individuals in nations where being a part of the LGBT community threatens their freedom, safety and, sometimes, their lives, the Rainbow Railroad provides a way out. In more than 70 countries worldwide, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, or LGBT citizens live in fear for their freedom, their safety and, in some cases, their lives. Their governments not only sanction brutality against them but often carry it out. There is no obvious or easy escape path, but for those lucky enough to hitch a ride, there is something called the Rainbow Railroad. Like the Underground Railroad, the Rainbow Railroad helps those fleeing danger get across borders to safety. And like its historical namesake, this network shrouds its operations in secrecy.
INFO - www.rainbowrailroad.com

| PHOTO: SCREENSHOT/TWITTER

HONG KONG

GAY LAWMAKER BRAWLS ON FLOOR OF PARLIAMENT

Hong Kong's only gay legislator got into a brawl on the floor of Parliament as the cameras rolled live on television reports Bil Browning for LGBTQ Nation. Several lawmakers were injured during the fracas and one was taken to the hospital. As lawmakers debated a controversial bill that would allow criminals to be removed from the city state without a formal extradition treaty. Many residents fear how China would abuse the process as a way to stifle dissent and describe it as an "authoritarian" maneuver. A former British colony, Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 after the communist country agreed to allow the city state to maintain a "one country two systems" governance that gives Hong Kong more freedom than in mainland China. Lawmaker Ray Chan, however, is adamantly opposed to the law since it would violate residents' human rights. "For those who know me," Chan tweeted after the fracas, "I usually keep a meek composure, practice meditation, prefer non-alcoholic drinks, and treat everyone with respect. But when an authoritarian state strikes, every fiber of my being turns into a fighter for my constituents." Video of the brawl shows Chan jumping on a table, shouting, and gesticulating wildly while other legislators attempt to grab his arms. He is not shown violently striking any of his fellow lawmakers. Chan was elected in 2016.

TURKEY

VIOLENCE USED AGAINST STUDENTS AT PRIDE MARCH

Reacting to the news that a Pride march organized by students on May 10 at the Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara has been violently broken up by police and 25 students arrested, Fotis Filippou, Campaigns Director for Europe at Amnesty International, said: "It is heartbreaking to hear that today's Pride march, which should have been a celebration of love and solidarity, was so violently broken up by police using pepper spray, plastic bullets and tear gas, and that at least 25 people have reportedly been unlawfully detained. Reports of excessive use of force by the police must be urgently investigated. Amnesty International condemns the police intervention to break up this celebration of pride on the METU campus today. It is a dark day when university authorities call the police to silence students who are simply demanding their rights to dignity and equality. All those detained by police must be released immediately and unconditionally." Students demonstrated peacefully but were told by police that they were not allowed to stand under tents, to fly a rainbow flag, to sit on the lawn, and eventually they were prevented from reading out a statement. Those detained include LGBTI student activists from ODTU LGBTI Solidarity group Melike Balkan and Özgür Gür and an academic from the university.

NATIONAL

Modern Military Association of America

WASHINGTON

MILITARY GROUPS MERGE

Recently the nation's two leading lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) military non-profits — the American Military Partner Association (AMPA) and OutServe-SLDN — merged. According to their news release, the merger forms the nation's largest non-profit organization dedicated to education, advocacy and support for LGBTQ service members, military spouses, veterans, family members and allies — the Modern Military Association of America. The Modern Military Association of America is launching at a challenging moment for the LGBTQ military community as the Trump-Pence administration rolls back progress by implementing a transgender military ban. Just last month, the discriminatory ban went into effect — impacting thousands of actively serving transgender military members and many more qualified transgender recruits who want to serve.
INFO - www.ModernMilitary.org

AMERICAN TALIBAN?

LEGISLATIVE ASSAULT BY CHRISTIAN NATIONALISTS

The emboldened religious right has unleashed a wave of legislation across the United States since Donald Trump became president, as part of an organized bid to impose hardline Christian values across American society writes David Taylor for *The Guardian*. In Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana and Tennessee so-called 'In God We Trust' bills have become law since 2017. A playbook known as Project Blitz, developed by a collection of Christian groups, has provided state politicians with a set of off-the-shelf pro-Christian "model bills". Some legislation uses verbatim language from the "model bills" created by a group called the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation (CPCF), set up by a former Republican congressman which has a stated aim to "protect religious freedom, preserve America's Judeo-Christian heritage and promote prayer". At least 75 bills have been brought forward in more than 20 states during 2017 and 2018 which appear to be modelled on or have similar objectives to the playbook, according to Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a campaign group which tracks legislation that undermines the principle of separation of church and state.

STATE

PghLESBIAN CORRESPONDENTS
PITTSBURGH'S LGBTQ BLOG SINCE 2005...

PITTSBURGH

56 LESBIAN STORIES FROM WESTERN PA

At the recent 30th Annual GLAAD Media Awards in New York, Sue Kerr, Pittsburgh Lesbian Correspondents, won the award for Outstanding Blog. This category recognizes the exceptional work of blogs that publish LGBTQ-related content via their platforms. The 56 lesbian stories Kerr offers here are available at this link – *www.pghlesbian.com*

Former RNC chair Michael Steele lays it out

Publisher's Voice

By Frank Pizzoli

Michael Steele resembles the men around me growing up. They were resolute about quietly helping others. And then they shut up. It was part of their foundational values to humbly do the right thing. No selfies allowed. References to helping others, a civic duty taught to children by example, were quietly called out.

Walking home one evening after a St. Vincent de Paul Society meeting, I was an excited 10-year-old. A carpenter would go over to a buddy's house and repair a leaky roof. My uncle put his finger to his lips, explaining that one doesn't talk about who gets help or who provided it. Human dignity is sacred, he told me in his own way.

The Society's purpose is for members to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those in need. That doesn't mean one racks up points by helping. Not that kind of growth. Rather, the growth comes from showing up, assessing and then acting.

Steele is all about taking action.

"We cannot walk away from one another," Steele told 50 people in Lancaster April 30 as part of the Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) – St. Joseph Children's Health public speaker series. The organization is "Dedicated to improving the health of children and families," according to their web site. Perhaps Steele learned the importance of not walking away when he was adopted as an infant.

Speaking to him by telephone the day before his local appearance, Steele explained how he came to his blend of personal and political values.

He spent three years preparing for the Catholic priesthood but left to enter civil service. Speaking onstage he told of pulling up to the seminary in a yellow car he loved. He was asked to turn over the keys. Later, he understood that his resource was for the good of all and not just for him. The same as a community's resources.

"What I learned while in seminary is foundational to who I am," Steele explained. "We're bound to one another," he said.

His example involved corporate audiences.

"I ask folks, who got up this morning, looked in the mirror and said, 'All I want to be today is poor?' No one ever raises their hand. Then I ask why they may think poor people do just that. They don't. They need our help." Steele broadens his message to include "other," the current political term used to indicate *Not like me.*

Enter CHI

"Our goal is to serve as a supportive voice and companion on their path to growing up healthy and happy," CEO/President Phil Goropoulos tells *The Central Voice.* Currently CHI operates a Lancaster-based Behavioral Health Center and Healthy Columbia (in Columbia, PA). Soon they will complete a ribbon-cutting ceremony for St. John Neumann School for Children and Families, scheduled to open in 2020.

Historically, three congregations of Women Religious brought together their respective health systems to form Catholic Health Initiatives in 1996 that is now a nationwide network. Such networks and community efforts all stripes can produce "concrete signs of mercy," Steele notes.

Bringing together his religious and political beliefs, Steele extolled his attentive audience, which included many regular MSNBC viewers, to focus on what they value. To stay engaged.

"We are a self-governing people," he stressed, adding "only we can decide what we want in our own communities."

Too tempting not to ask, audience questions reflected the current Trump versus the world show playing out in all media formats. Summarizing his thoughts Steele thinks the Charlottesville shooting was an inflection point in the national psyche. "I think the country responded by saying what took place there does represent what this nation is all about. By saying That's not who we are."

"We all must stay engaged," he concluded.

Who is Michael Steele?

Steele is an American conservative political commentator and currently a political analyst for MSNBC and a contributor to Fox News Channel. He's guested on cable political talk shows HBO Real Time with Bill Maher, Comedy Central's Daily Show, and The Colbert Report. He served as the seventh Lieutenant Governor of Maryland (2003-2007), that state's first African-American elected to statewide office. He also served as Republican National Committee (RNC) chairperson (2009-2011), the first African-American to serve in that capacity.

Regarding LGBT civil rights, Steele told Think Progress journalist Zack Ford in 2012, "I've been very supportive of gay rights activists... I do not support gay marriage because of my own religious tenets and my faith tradition, but at the same time I do believe in making sure that gay individuals have full privileges and benefits, whether it's insurance and health and all the other things that couples would have in a relationship, and I would argue the same for heterosexual couples. I don't understand why you have a man and a woman who live together for 7, 8, 10 years, whatever, why they can't enjoy the same type of benefits."

Voice Box

Notes from our readers

E-mail your comments to frankpizzoli@gmail.com

A POWERFUL VOICE

Thank you for being such a powerful voice for our community!

- PA State Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, (182 District, Phila.)

THANKS FOR THE HONOR

Thanks for including me in Central Voice. It's an honor!

- Bishop Michael J. Scalzi, The Old Catholic Church

SUPREME DEVELOPMENT

Thank you so much! We appreciate your reporting on this important development. (See page 28, "Supreme court allows positive trans ruling to stand")

- Jason Landau Goodman, Executive Director, PA Youth Congress

LOOK WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED

Opening Night is just three days away and tonight finds us in our final dress rehearsal for this incredible event! I wanted to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for what has been done on our behalf. From promoting on your social media to the recording of video segments for the show, your response, outreach and support has been more than we could have hoped for. It's amazing what can be accomplished when the major LGBTQ+ stakeholders in Central Pennsylvania join together to promote a common cause...

- Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus
From a group email sent to CV

the Central Voice

CENTRAL PA'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE

NEWSPAPER of the YEAR

PUBLISHER & EDITOR
Frank Pizzoli
frankpizzoli@gmail.com

ART DIRECTOR
Louise Sukle

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Julianna Sukle

CARTOONIST
Brad Gebhart

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Yvonne Carmichael
Louie Marven
Trum Simmons
Terry Drew Karanen
Amanda Arbour
Nicolas Duncan

SALES MANAGER
Dave Brown 717-944-4628
DaveBrown@pressandjournal.com

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Chris Thomas 717-919-1394
ChrisThomas@pressandjournal.com

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LBGT Protection Bills Intro'd in PA's House, Senate

By Frank Pizzoli

House Bill 1404 by Rep. Dan Frankel and Senate Bill 614 by Sen. Farnese are now in the legislative game. With similar language, they provide basic civil rights for LGBT individuals.

That's if they pass.

Pennsylvania has had similar legislation introduced in 2011, 2013, 2016, and 2018. And that's where all activity stopped.

The companion bills introduced on May 6 would update Pennsylvania's current nondiscrimination law – originally written in 1955 – to ensure that all residents, regardless of race, color, religion, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, disability -- and now sexual orientation, gender identity and expression – can participate in and contribute to the state's economy.

It is currently legal in Pennsylvania to fire someone and deny them housing or business services solely based of the person being gay or transgender. And that's even though a recent survey of state residents shows that 73 % incorrectly believe discrimination against gay and transgender people in the workplace and in housing and business services is already illegal.

Rep. Frankel finds the current situation – 55 of 2,685 municipalities in the state have protections, the remaining 2,630 do not - "incredulous, what a patchwork of protections within our state." The business community understands, Frankel noted, citing a statement issued by the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce supporting HB 1404.

Locally, Keystone Business Alliance, the region's LGBT chamber in attendance at the press conference, has endorsed Open to All, a nationwide public engagement campaign to build understanding and discussion about the importance of nondiscrimination laws. There are more than 200 other US organizations and businesses supporting the campaign, according to their web site.

Also represented at the announcement were TransCentralPA, PA Youth Congress, and Trans Advocacy Pennsylvania.

When Amazon searched for an East coast headquarters in late 2018, many entities threw their hat into the contest for the possible 50,000 jobs. Many observers thought it was a wasted effort since Pennsylvania doesn't have protections as does the online behemoth. Workers could potentially have more protections in the Amazon workplace and less when driving home.

Jessi Purdy

Local testimony

Jessi Purdy, Lancaster Pride Festival Chair, spoke at the legislative unveiling. A transgender woman, she spoke of difficulties faced with everyday life scenarios – renting an apartment, employment, access to health care. "I had it all growing up – shoving, pushing, name-calling," Purdy told Central Voice after speaking in the Capital Media Center.

Todd Snovel, PA Commission on LGBTQ Affairs, said, "Imagine – six words – what a difference adding them would make to our laws that protect people from discrimination" in housing, employment, public accommodations and the provision of goods and services.

Strong support

"We have all 22 Senate Democrats signed on to this legislation," Sen. Farnese said at the press conference.

Openly gay PA State Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, 181st District, speaking about the lack of basic civil rights protections for LGBT taxpayers, said "It is time for Pennsylvania to wipe this stain from its history." He spoke of an 11-year-old boy who hung himself due to chronic school-based bullying because of his perceived sexuality.

Openly-gay PA State Rep. Brian Sims,

Please see **PROTECTION**, page **28**

Gov. Wolf: Pennsylvania must protect LGBTQ citizens from violence, discrimination

"...Pennsylvania remains glaringly behind our neighbors on equality and protections for LGBTQ citizens"

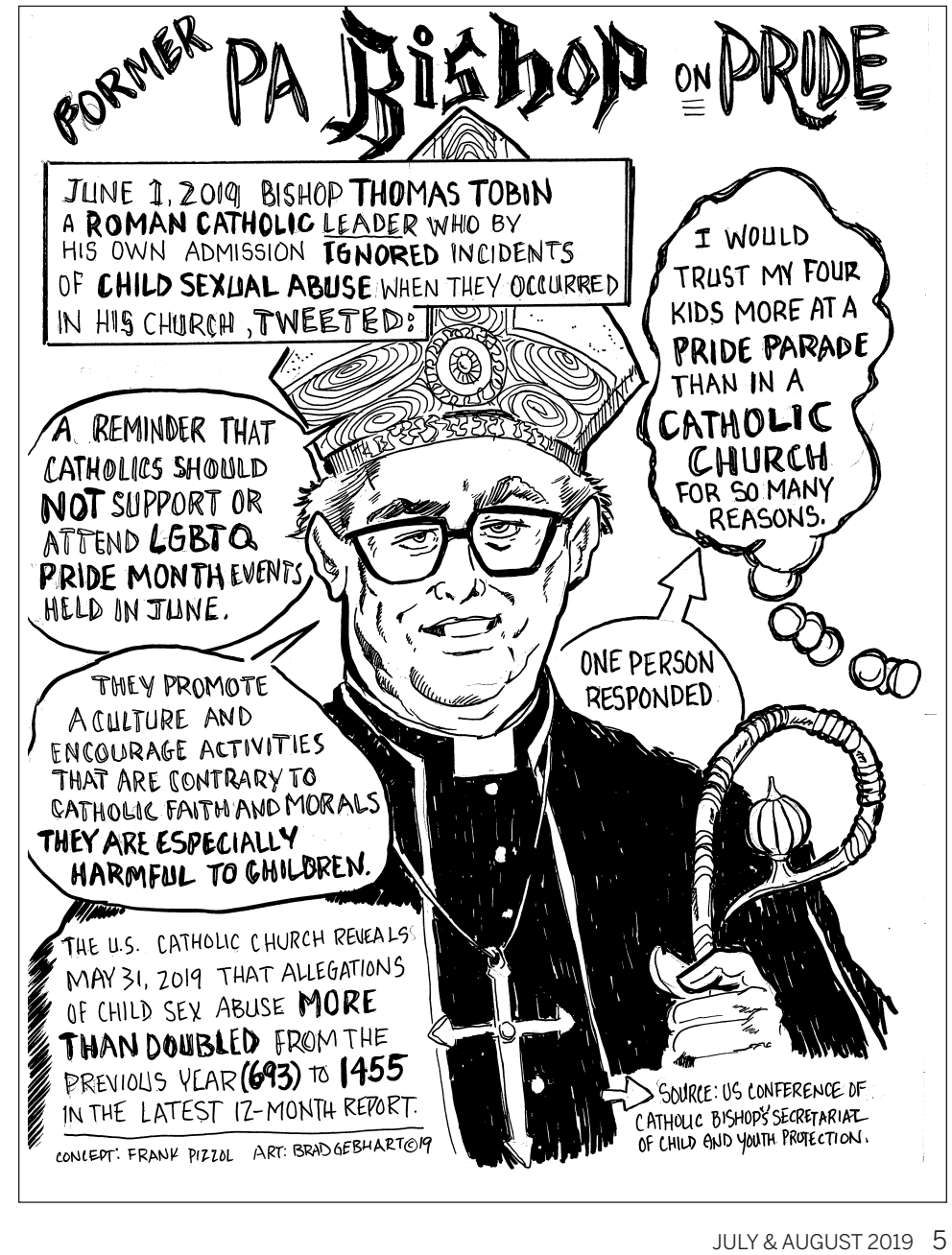
-Governor Tom Wolf

Gov. Wolf

Across the country, there has been an alarming trend of violence against LGBTQ citizens, especially trans women of color. Governor Tom Wolf and the Pennsylvania Commission on LGBTQ Affairs today reaffirmed its support for the LGBTQ community, denounced this violence and urged the approval of pending bills to provide LGBTQ citizens additional protections from hate crimes and ensure comprehensive, non-discrimination protections.

"Despite the progress we have made towards equality, Pennsylvania remains glaringly behind our neighbors on equality and protections for LGBTQ citizens," Governor Wolf said. "Now more than ever, we must ensure protections for LGBTQ citizens. The trend of violence against trans women of color is disturbing but this violence is not new and we've watched as it has escalated. We owe it to our citizens to provide them the protections that ensure their safety. We mourn the loss of Michelle 'Tamika' Washington, a black trans woman and longtime advocate for the transgender community, who was senselessly murdered on Sunday. Let us use this moment to make these long-overdue changes without further delay."

"We must not remain silent and we must never forget those that were lost to violence," Todd Snovel, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Commission on LGBTQ Affairs, said. "We will never forget Tamika's legacy of fighting for what is right, we will say her name, and we will not accept this violence as normal. Let us pledge our collective energy towards passing comprehensive, non-discrimination protections and expanding our hate crimes laws to protect our LGBTQ citizens from violence."


FORMER PA BISHOP ON PRIDE
JUNE 1, 2019 BISHOP THOMAS TOBIN A ROMAN CATHOLIC LEADER WHO BY HIS OWN ADMISSION IGNORED INCIDENTS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE WHEN THEY OCCURRED IN HIS CHURCH, TWEETED:
A REMINDER THAT CATHOLICS SHOULD NOT SUPPORT OR ATTEND LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH EVENTS HELD IN JUNE.
THEY PROMOTE A CULTURE AND ENCOURAGE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE CONTRARY TO CATHOLIC FAITH AND MORALS THEY ARE ESPECIALLY HARMFUL TO CHILDREN.
I WOULD TRUST MY FOUR KIDS MORE AT A PRIDE PARADE THAN IN A CATHOLIC CHURCH FOR SO MANY REASONS.
ONE PERSON RESPONDED
THE U.S. CATHOLIC CHURCH REVEALS MAY 31, 2019 THAT ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD SEX ABUSE MORE THAN DOUBLED FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR (693) TO 1455 IN THE LATEST 12-MONTH REPORT.
SOURCE: US CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOP'S SECRETARIAT OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION.
CONCEPT: FRANK PIZZOL ART: BRADGEBHART©19

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PETE BUTTIGIEG:

Identity politics 'doesn't get us very far'

In a speech May 12 in Las Vegas, the presidential candidate called out his fellow Democrats for pitting one group's grievances against another's.

LAS VEGAS — Pete Buttigieg, reports Josh Lederman for NBC News, sought to diffuse weeks of fraught questions about white privilege and his struggles attracting minorities to his campaign by calling out fellow Democrats on May 12 for playing "identity politics" and pitting one group's grievances against another's.

In a risky speech to the Human Rights Campaign, a major LGBT rights group, Buttigieg warned of a "crisis of belonging in this country," arguing it was exacerbated by "so-called identity politics" that emphasize how one person hasn't walked in another's shoes — "something that is true, but it doesn't get us very far."

He drew a direct line between the obstacles faced by a black, trans woman excluded by mainstream society and an out-of-work auto worker excluded by the new economy.

"What I worry about is not the president's fantasy wall on the Mexican border that's not going to get built anyway," Buttigieg said. "What I worry about are the very real walls that we are putting up between us as we get divided and carved up."

For Buttigieg, it was the culmination of almost daily interrogation on the campaign trail about what may be his most significant liability as a Democratic primary candidate: The nagging concern that as a white man with a Harvard and Oxford pedigree, he's the wrong candidate at a moment when Democrats seem to be pining for someone who can embody the lingering inequities faced by less-privileged minorities. That comes despite the fact that Buttigieg, if elected, would be the first openly gay president.

Buttigieg's supporters have been energized by the notion that as a Democratic, Midwest mayor in a conservative state who speaks fluently about his faith, he seems uniquely positioned to win back the type of voters who abandoned Democrats in 2016 and helped elect President Donald Trump: white, working-class voters, especially in rural areas. But what could be a key advantage for Buttigieg in a general election has become an albatross in the Democratic primary.

So Buttigieg used a venue where he has the most credibility — a gathering of well-heeled LGBT activists — to try to pre-empt that vulnerability before most Americans have fully tuned into the primary.

In doing so, Buttigieg offered the most pointed critique of his own party so far in the campaign, in a moment that had echoes of Bill Clinton's "Sistah Souljah" moment in 1992 when he distanced himself from a black political activist who had made controversial comments about race.

"When an auto worker, 12 years into their career, is no longer sure how to provide for their family, they're not part of the country we think of ourselves as all living in together. That's why we can't seem to get on the same page," Buttigieg said.

Such "divisive lines of thinking" have entered Democrats' mindset, Buttigieg said, adding: "Like when we're told we have to choose between supporting an auto worker and a trans woman of color, without stopping to think about the fact that sometimes the auto worker is a trans woman of color, and she definitely needs all the security she can get."

At least in the room at the Human Rights Campaign gala, his remarks appeared well-received. As he left the stage to applause, he was followed by black transgender singer Shea Diamond, who soulfully crooned the lyrics to her song "American Pie."

"Just want my piece of the American pie. Got your slice, where is mine?" she sang.

Buttigieg also called out Trump on several occasions, saying that many of the objections to identity politics "come from the right, which is ironic at this time because the current administration has mastered the practice of the most divisive form of such politics, which is white identity politics, designed to drive apart people with common interests."

He said he'd be "happy to debate marriage with this president" — a reference to Trump's three marriages — and called out casino mogul and billionaire Republican donor Sheldon Adelson by name while standing inside a ballroom in Caesar's Palace on the Las Vegas Strip.

"I know I'm a guest in Sheldon Adelson's town," Buttigieg said, prompting boos from the crowd at hearing Adelson's name. "But I know … that real democracy means that the voice you have in our political process is gauged by the merits of what you have to say and not by the number of zeros in your bank balance."

Would you vote for Buttigieg because he's gay?

At press time, Mayor Pete Buttigieg was surging to 14% in Iowa polls.

The Central Voice asked three openly-gay men involved in electoral politics to reflect on Mayor Pete Buttigieg. Alex Reber, Chris Dietz, and Ben Allatt attended a Buttigieg fundraiser in Washington, DC hosted by the LGBT-affiliated Victory Fund. Buttigieg was keynote speaker.

Alex Reber is Treasurer of the Pennsylvania State Democratic Party and 1st Vice Chair of the Dauphin County Democratic Party.

"I have not decided who I will vote for in the 2020 Democratic primary," Reber says. "I'm looking forward to the debates and hearing from our excellent group of candidates."

He finds Buttigieg "inspiring…as an LGBT person and Millennial running for our nation's highest office." Reber's most likes how "he frames the Democratic Party's values as moral issues. He reminds us that we need to lead by our values."

"I really like his position on abolishing the electoral college," Reber says.

When he looked around the room where Buttigieg spoke, Reber said, "There was not a dry eye in the room when he openly shared how when he was struggling with his own sexuality." Buttigieg told those assembled, as he has media-wide, he often wished there was a pill he could take to change how he felt or if he could just cut out that part of himself.

Reber found his story 'relatable'.

"That is certainly something I could relate to growing up in an Evangelical church," he said. Reber's hopeful that "young people who see the first openly LGBT major party candidate for President will know it's okay to be themselves and that they will be loved and accepted." That's what's most inspiring to Reber about Buttigieg's historic candidacy.

Chris Dietz currently serves as President of Millersburg borough council. He also unsuccessfully ran for the Pennsylvania House 104.

Dietz will vote for Buttigieg "because of his optimistic approach to policy, his experience being Mayor in South Bend, his military experience, and his openness about serving as an out-LGBT official."

Dietz sees the candidate as striving "to connect with people from all backgrounds and has great interest in developing polices to give everyone a fair shot at attaining the American Dream."

Buttigieg's "can-do attitude and progressive plans to move government forward onto a more transparent and efficient plane" also impresses Dietz. He thinks the candidate wants to "include all Americans in the process…in sharp contrast to the current administration." Dietz likes how Buttigieg "has the ability to inspire us, to lead us into new opportunities, and manage government bureaucracy. These are the qualities of great leaders."

"He does not need to rely on fear as a tool motivate people. I would rather be led by proactive optimism than by soul crushing fear," Dietz says.

Ben Allatt has served on Harrisburg City Council since 2014.

He is "excited about the diverse field of candidates for the 2020 Presidential Primary." He's also "happy to support Mayor Pete for a lot of reasons."

Allatt has been "very impressed with how he has been able to conduct himself on the national stage, his degree of comfort and putting out a sense of calm leadership in a time of turbulence being projected daily from the current White House."

He also thinks Buttigieg "he has been able to strike a chord for those who live in areas that have struggled outside of the nation's largest metro areas. As a locally elected official I am well aware of how well versed we need to be on issues coming out of the federal and state level. The impact is seen firsthand. Mayor Pete has that advantage."

With so many candidates running Allatt will continue listen to Buttigieg has to say.

The historic nature of Buttigieg's run "is not lost on me," notes Allatt. Millions of Americans are getting "a firsthand look at how natural…our LGBT lives are and can be especially when we have found the one we love. That clearly isn't the reason why I support Mayor Pete, but it is certainly a factor that endears him to me more."

Pride.

For 50 years, Stonewall has been the symbolic place where Pride began, lives and thrives. Comcast NBCUniversal honors this and all the monumental achievements made by the LGBTQ community and salutes the brave individuals continuing the fight.

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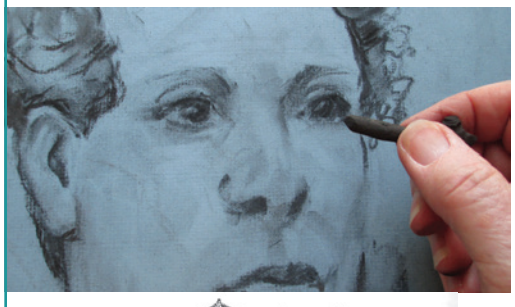
Art Association of HARRISBURG

Upcoming Events



July 20th, 5-8 pm:
Soirée in the Country
- Hosted by Linda & Lowell Gates, Gettysburg Road, Mechanicsburg
- Tickets: $45 advance, $50 door

August 4th, 5-8 pm:
Cornerstone Culinary Kitchen Soirée
- Hosted by Brandon Roger, Jan & Joe Bahret, Market Street, Camp Hill
- Tickets: $45 advance, $50 door

August 25th, 5-8 pm:
King Mansion Soirée
- Hosted by Marc Kurowski, Front Street, Harrisburg
- Tickets: $45 advance, $50 door

July 15th-August 24th:
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Through July 18th:
"Free For All" Student & Member Exhibition

July 26th-August 9th:
Invitational Exhibition

CULTURAL ENRICHMENT FUND

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Arts & Entertainment

Gay Men's Chorus brings together diverse community

Presented in LGBT-friendly Market Street Presbyterian Church May 11, Two Boys Kissing brought together a diverse community of 200+ to hear the choral work that combines history and current affairs. In all, the chorus presented three free concerts for the community-at-large. The concerts were funded by The "Arts for All" Partnership, an alliance between The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC) and the Cultural Enrichment Fund (CEF). Central Voice was a collaborator with other organizations to bring the concert to the community.

Info - harrisburggaymenschorus.org

BLONDIE
JUNE 23 | Strand Theatre

ART GARFUNKEL IN CLOSE-UP
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SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES
JULY 27 | Strand Theatre

XPN PRESENTS: MAVIS STAPLES
JULY 30 | Strand Theatre

GAVIN DEGRAW
AUG. 1 | Strand Theatre

THE NEW POWER GENERATION: FEATURING THE MUSIC OF PRINCE
AUG. 2 | Strand Theatre

DWEEZIL ZAPPA - "HOT RATS AND OTHER HOT STUFF"
SEPT. 8 | Strand Theatre

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BEAUTIFUL – THE CAROLE KING MUSICAL
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BLACK VIOLIN: IMPOSSIBLE TOUR
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THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR SHOW
NOV. 15 | Strand Theatre

CAP LIVE

FOLSOM PRISON REVIVAL - A JOHNNY CASH TRIBUTE SHOW
JULY 20 | Capitol Theatre

DONAVON FRANKENREITER
AUG. 23 | Capitol Theatre

RECKLESS KELLY
SEPT. 11 | Capitol Theatre

XPN PRESENTS: SHEMEKIA COPELAND
SEPT. 14 | Capitol Theatre

DARLINGSIDE
SEPT. 25 | Capitol Theatre

JOHN WAITE
OCT. 11 | Capitol Theatre

DAR WILLIAMS
OCT. 19 | Capitol Theatre

CAP COMEDY

EVERY SECOND FRIDAY AT 7:30 PM

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JULY 19 | Capitol Theatre

HANK DENSON
AUG. 9 | Capitol Theatre

BRENT TERHUNE
SEPT. 13 | Capitol Theatre

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OCT. 18 | Capitol Theatre

TRENTON DAVIS
NOV. 8 | Capitol Theatre

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RECLAIM PRIDE from page 1

Month. Where has this apology been for the last 50 years? The NYPD Vice Squad is still in business, busting sex workers and others, while its members run their own brothels. The NYPD is still arresting trans kids of color for walking down the street, and arrested a transwoman in the Bronx who was walking home from work, holding her in custody for 24 hours, in handcuffs! The NYPD has spent decades entrapping gay men. And the NYPD continues to strike fear in communities of color and other marginalized communities." *(Full text on RCP web site - reclaimpridenyc.org.)*

A New Pride for A New Community

Plans for the Queer Liberation March have attracted LGBTQs who no longer feel the mainstream HOP march represents their interests or identity. Transwoman Robin Scott attended an RPC meeting after friends said they were seeking a graphic designer. Scott donated her time to make posters, having done Pride designs for Equality New York several years prior.

"The truth is, I found the group to be a powerful revolutionary community," said Scott, now RPC's lead designer. "It's a progressive organization with people into activism and the New York Pride community. And it's neat to be around folks who remember the first march, being rounded up by the police for daring to go into the street, back when all of this was still a riot."

When they wanted a design capturing the bold, aggressive, revolutionary spirit of the '70s, Scott created palm cards, banners, and posters using the same Pantone 212C pink Act Up used on their legendary 1985 Silence=Death poster.

"It looks really great, and it sets us apart from the many rainbows of Pride," said Scott. "It's a distinct visual."

While support from corporations may have been validating in the past, many view their continued participation in Pride celebrations as merely "an advertising vehicle, a cheap venue, and a little moral credibility by being part of it," as Northrop put it.

Said Michael Musto, columnist for NewNowNext.com, "Corporate endorsement of our community is fine, but it sometimes leaves us plagued with questions like, 'What took you so long? Are you pro queer all year long or just one day a year? And will your money and clout supplant some of the grassroots community on a day that's supposed to be about our visibility?' Reclaim Pride is a wonderful antidote to all of this, as well as a return to grassroots activism and an urgent fight for human rights."

Northrop appreciates when major corporations speak against anti-LGBT legislation, but "that doesn't mean we turn over the whole parade to them."

Scott recalled proudly donning rainbow gear and roller-blading in the HOP parade—and she also remembers why she stopped. Two years ago, she tried to march with suicide prevention group The Trevor Project, but instead stood for four hours behind a Chipotle float.

"We never even stepped off; we were just stuck behind all the corporate floats," said Scott.

Many were disgusted when the HOP parade barred individuals from marching, while selling spots up front to corporations, so "they'll be featured on the local broadcasts their money pays for, essentially buying TV time," said Northrop.

With 550 contingents and 100 floats, the behemoth HOP parade has become untenable for many. Community organizations are relegated to the back of the six-hour procession. The added attraction of WorldPride makes this year's event larger than usual.

"You can talk to anyone in New York and they'll say, 'I hate that parade so much, it's such a mess, it doesn't move, it's discouraging and so corporate,'" said Northrop. "For Stonewall 50, we have to take this parade back to its roots, and create something with values that's not just another meaningless party."

"...we have to take this parade back to its roots, and create something with values that's not just another meaningless party."

- Ann Northrup

Neither is Northrop thrilled about WorldPride, which she called "cheeky and political" when held during the Vatican's Jubilee, but has since become, "just another circuit party." Still, she had nothing negative to say about HOP organizers, and encouraged people to attend both.

"We all want something to march for, something to fight for. And I'm humbled to be a part of something I think will be as culturally important as that first march," echoed Scott. "What's going to happen on June 30th is monumental. I think our march is going to be THE march, maybe even the last year they have the HOP march—not that any of us is tearing them down. But we are still being crushed by bigotry, fascism, and capitalism. Liberation is the next step. It's time to come out and be part of the revolution."

Before there were any Pride activities in south central Pennsylvania, members of the LGBT community rented busses to attend NYC Pride events. Harrisburg resident Steve Leshner, 1978, in Central Park celebrating Pride where Melissa Etheridge performed. Etheride performs again June 30 at the NYC Pride final celebration in NYC's iconic Times Square.

STONEWALL 50TH ANNIVERSARY

NYC heritage of Pride & region share history

By The Central Voice

South central Pennsylvania's LGBT community has had a long history with NYC Pride.

NYC Pride, the official host of WorldPride 2019 | Stonewall 50 is a nonprofit organization that plans and produces New York City's official LGBT Pride events each year to commemorate the Stonewall Riots of 1969—the beginning of the modern Gay Rights movement.

Harrisburg-area resident John Folby, well-known throughout the state and nation for his work in the field of HIV/AIDS, often tells the story of how tireless advocate and activist Jerry Brennan, now deceased, felt so strongly that the region's LGBT community needed to experience NYC Pride he would volunteer to organize a bus, or two, so people could attend events.

"That's how we'd get there. Jerry would put it all together. Others helped, of course," Steve Leshner tells Central Voice. In 1978, he was in Central Park celebrating Pride where Melissa Etheridge performed. Etheridge performs again June 30 at the NYC Pride final celebration in NYC's iconic Times Square.

In recent years, Pride Festival of Central Pennsylvania, under the leadership of Brad Martin, has continued the tradition of sponsoring a bus to attend NYC Pride events.

From left: Steve Leshner, John Barnes, and Jerry Brennan (deceased) at a circa 1986 NYC Pride Parade.

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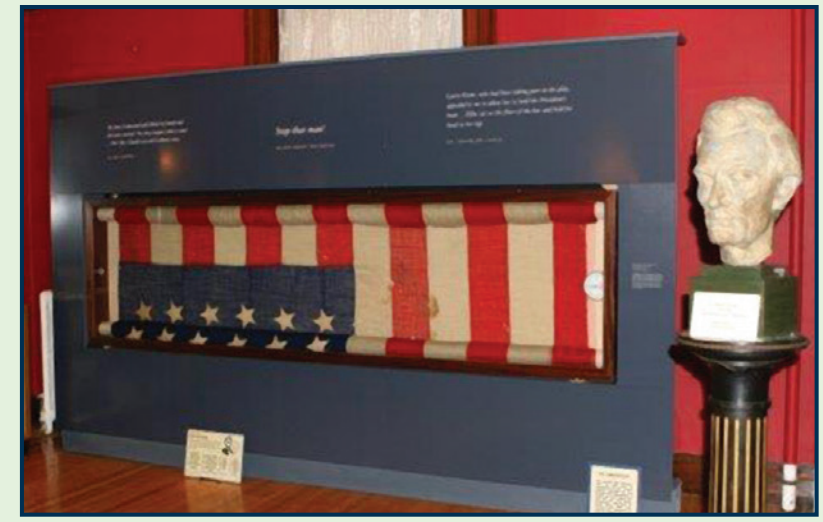

Columns Museum with its most famous relic: the blood-stained flag that cushioned President Lincoln's head moments after he was assassinated.

HOTEL FAUCHÈRE EST. 1852

Pike County Historical Society at The Columns

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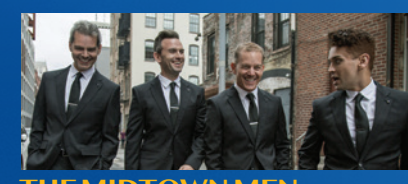

THE MIDTOWN MEN
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A CELTIC FAMILY CHRISTMAS
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11, 2019 • 7:30PM

"WE SHALL OVERCOME"
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SATURDAY, JAN. 25, 2020 • 7:30PM

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SUNDAY, FEB. 9, 2020 • 3:00PM

THE IRISH COMEDY TOUR
FRIDAY, MAR. 6, 2020 • 7:30PM

BALLET FOLCLÓRICO
NACIONAL DE MÉXICO
DE SILVIA LOZANO
THURSDAY, MAR. 19, 2020 • 7:30PM

RICH LITTLE
FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2020 • 7:30PM

YORK Equality FEST

OFFICIAL GUIDE
PUBLISHED BY the Central Voice

"THE LESSONS WE LEARNED AT STONEWALL"

York's inclusive answer to Pride, Equality Fest is a family-wfriendly community festival celebrating diversity across York County.

AUGUST 4
PENN PARK
YORK, PA

Thank you to the festival partners who make this event possible...

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SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO:
YORK LGBTQIA+ RESOURCE CENTER IN THE I.D.E.A.S. CENTER

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Check out
equalityfestyork.com
for the latest updates and changes

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YORK Equality FEST

HOSTED BY THE FABULOUS:
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SARABESQUE

CROSSFIRE3

SHAKES-QUEER THEATRE

POP-UP GALLERY

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12:30 - 2:00 P.M.	UNITY RALLY FEAT: COMMUNITY LEADERS, PERFORMANCES BY SARABESQUE, AND THE STONEWALL LEGACY AWARD CEREMONY
2:00 - 2:30 P.M.	MUSIC BY CROSSFIRE3
2:30 - 3:00 P.M.	BELL SOCIALIZATION'S BIG BED RACE
3:00 - 4:00 P.M.	MUSICAL SPECIAL GUEST
4:00 - 5:00 P.M.	WEARY ARTS GROUP PRESENTS "SHAKES-QUEER THEATRE"
5:00 - 6:00 P.M.	LOCAL MUSIC SHOWCASE

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YORK EQUALITY FEST HONORS MULTIPLE MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES AND SHOWCASES THE BEAUTIFUL CONTRIBUTIONS OF LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS, WOMEN, IMMIGRANTS, STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE, SENIORS, THE DIFFERENTLY-ABLED AND OTHERS TO HIGHLIGHT THAT THE YORK COMMUNITY STRIVES FOR OPPORTUNITY, SAFETY AND HOPE FOR ALL OF YORK'S PEOPLE!

THIS YEAR'S EQUALITY FEST THEME:

"THE LESSONS WE LEARNED AT STONEWALL"

Why is Stonewall important to you?

The Stonewall riots (also referred to as the Stonewall uprising or the Stonewall rebellion) were a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations by members of the gay (LGBT) community against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of Manhattan, New York City. They are widely considered to constitute the most important event leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for LGBT rights in the United States.

Source: Wikipedia.org

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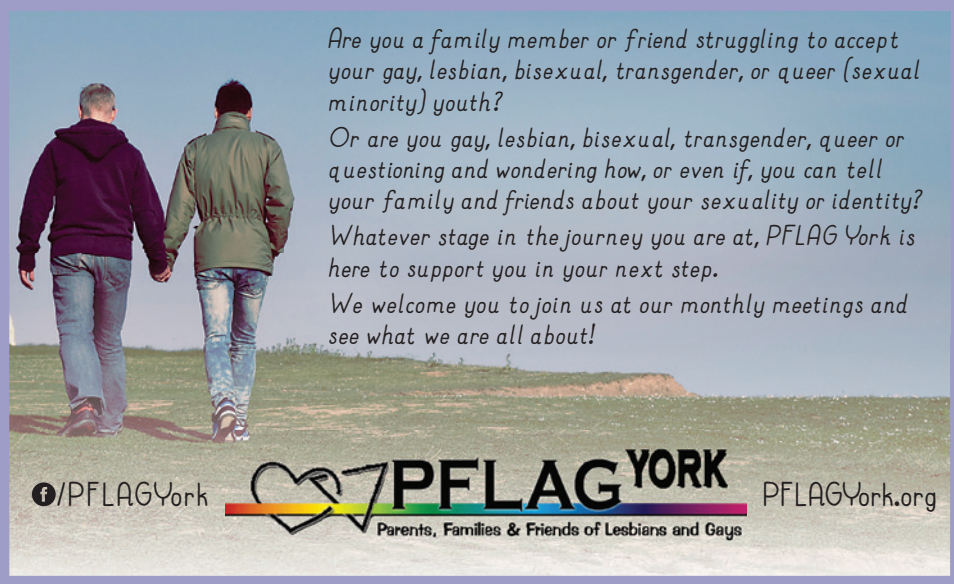
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on Facebook to learn where we'll pop up next!

Community members celebrate the official ribbon cutting of the new home to York's LGBTQIA+ Resource Center located in York.

Downtown York welcomes new resource center for LBGTQA+

The ribbon was cut May 31 on the York LGBTQIA+ Resource Center.

The York Center is located at 15 N. Cherry Lane, off of Cherry Lane Park in downtown York City. The center is inside the I.D.E.A.S. Center. I.D.E.A.S. stands for inclusion, diversity, equity, and social change and is a cooperative co-working and resource sharing space for York County organizations with a shared message and mission.

Resources and referral sheets are available during weekday business hours and LGBTQIA+ volunteers are on site every Sunday from 1-5 p.m. and Tuesday from 10 a.m–2 p.m. to answer questions and offer a listening ear. Other services include workshops on topics like LGBTQIA+ aging and adoption, a lending library and clothing swap, movie nights, and trainings available on or off-site.

The idea for a York LGBTQIA+ Resource Center has been percolating since 2017 when the last venue that specifically served LGBTQIA+ audiences closed according to center director, Carla Christopher-Waid. Waid is also president of York's answer to Pride, the annual event known as Equality Fest.

"Clearly LGBTQIA+ people and families didn't go anywhere," Waid explains. "Thousands of us still attend Equality Fest and Equality Fest Jr, our kid's Pride. Hundreds of us gather every month at Guerilla Gay Bar. York has an active gay bowling league, a thriving PFLAG chapter, multiple groups that serve youth and young adults."

Please see **RESOURCE CENTER**, page **28**

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Trans Central PA Topics

By Holly Evans

Visibility is important all year long

Visible, to be seen. As transgender individuals this one word can be both terrifying and yet so freeing and it is so very important to us all. On March 31 we celebrated Transgender Day of Visibility. And just recently, all of Europe celebrated it as well. One Day devoted to being Visible. My question to you all is Why just one day?

Initially, when we, as transgender individuals, are closeted and struggling with our identity the one thing we fear most is being visible or being seen. In that moment when we find a small window of opportunity to be our true selves, to feel whole, and free of the daily struggle of gender dysphoria, the one thing we fear most is someone seeing us or, being seen, or visible.

Later as we decide that we can no longer live totally closeted, we seek out support, we may confide in someone we feel to be understanding and sympathetic or we speak with a therapist. And for a brief period, we feel both terrified and yet relived to share our story and be visible or seen for who we are. Finally, we can talk to someone about what we have dealt with all our lives. We can be visible in a small and controlled environment, yet we are still fearful and terrified of others learning our secret, of being truly visible.

Later we learn of other individuals like ourselves, we continue to open up, but in limited measures, in very controlled environments. We go places where we are surrounded by others like ourselves. We associate with other transgender individuals. We may even create a separate Facebook account with our transgender persona so that we can connect with our transgender friends. The entire time keeping the rest of the world out of this aspect of our lives. All this time we feel we have become somewhat visible, and yet we are still terrified of being truly visible to the rest of the world.

Finally, for some of us, we take that next step, we make that giant leap. We finally choose to live some, or all, of our lives outside that controlled environment, amongst the rest of the world. We are finally free of that daily struggle with our gender identity, yet at the same time we are still so scared, so terrified of being figured out, harassed, singled out as we go about our lives, or to places such as to the grocery store, or out to dinner. We are fearful of possibly losing loved ones, losing friends, losing our job, being singled out for who we are. Because now we are visible and seen by all.

Until we step out amongst the rest of the world, become visible, and let everyone know that we are here, that we are human, that we are no different than anyone else and that we deserve to be seen, we allow the years of prejudice and lack of education amongst those who simply do not understand control our lives. For their inability to associate the face of someone they know and love to the years of stigmatism associated with being transgender allows them to disassociate themselves from us. It allows it to be less personal. It allows them to see us as less than.

Until we prevent them from thinking in this manor, we will not be able to bring an end to the years of prejudices and misunderstandings. It is time we are visible and educate those around us. It is time to end the years of prejudice and put a face on who we are. For as our friends and families come to know and love us for who we truly are, and as we educate the world around us…our own little piece of this planet, opinions will change. We will progressively educate them one at a time, the walls of prejudice will slowly come down and acceptance will become the norm.

I know that it takes time to achieve the confidence needed to go out on your own among others. So, take it one day at a time. One step at a time. Go and do things with friends, in small groups. Build your confidence. For as we gain our confidence being visible, those around us get to be more comfortable and accepting of us by simply being around. We educate them simply by our presence. Don't be afraid to extend your hand and offer a kind gesture. Be a positive role model, an ambassador for the transgender community, be visible. As those around us get to know us and put that face to who we are opinions will change. Education is a good thing—fear and prejudice are born out of ignorance, or a lack of education.

It is my vision for TransCentralPA and members of the transgender community to be more visible and more involved in our communities. You don't need to carry a sign or make a scene—simply be yourself. Own it. Be truly Visible. In doing so, we continue to help, support and inspire others who maybe still closeted, hiding in fear and looking to find the courage to be their authentic selves. Help pave their way and BE PROUD of who you are

Holly Evans is the President, TransCentralPA.

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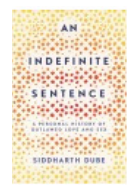
Dauphin County Library Book Reviews

By Yvonne Carmichael

Summer reading for every age

Here's a summer reading list for children, teens, and adults. These mainly fiction titles delve into common issues of change, identity, romance, friendship, resistance and loss. Remember, the Dauphin County Library System has even more titles to enjoy over the summer. Also, our Summer Reading Club began on June 1, 2019. Come by any of our libraries to register and get a Program Calendar. The Summer Reading Club is for all ages, and our Program Calendar offers family events as well as programs geared for specific ages. *INFO - www.dcls.org*

An Indefinite Sentence: A Personal History of Outlawed Love and Sex by Siddharth Dube

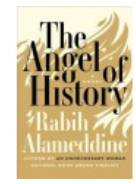


"A public health visionary gets personal with a powerful exploration of 'the beguiling possibilities of gender beyond the conventional bipolarity of male and female, and the mysterious, limitless permutations of sexual desire.' World Policy Institute senior fellow Dube (Sex, Lies, and AIDS, 2001, etc.) was born in Calcutta and is known for his work on poverty and AIDS. In this memoir, he recounts his journey to come out as a young gay man in India and America and his efforts to find a loving relationship in midlife. " (From Kirkus Reviews)

Fat Angie: Rebel Girl Revolution by E.E. Charlton-Trujillo

This teen novel is the "companion to the Stonewall Award-winning Fat Angie, Angie's girlfriend has moved away, Angie is constantly bullied as she starts as a sophomore after repeating her freshman year, her mother still can't stand her, and her former best friend, Jamboree, is back in town. On the verge of suspension and being sent to a treatment facility/gay-conversion program, Angie hits the road with Jamboree and squabbling cousins Zeke and Darius as she tries to live out her late sister's last wishes, communicated to her in a final letter." (From Publishers Weekly)

The Angel of History by Rabih Alameddine



"This darkly funny follow-up to "An Unnecessary Woman", named a National Book Award and a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist and a best book by over half a dozen venues, features the Yemeni-born Jacob, who wrestles with Satan and Death itself in the waiting room of a psychiatric clinic. Raised first by his mother in an Egyptian whorehouse and then by his gilded father, Jacob is a poet who came of age as a gay Arab man in AIDS-ravaged San Francisco. A seductive Satan keeps reminding Jacob of past sorrows, while Death insists he has no reason to keep living. At least Jacob has 14 saints on his side." (From Library Journal)

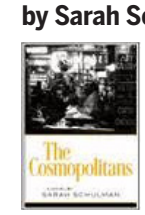
The House of Impossible Beauties by Joseph Cassara

"Inspired in part by Jennie Livingston's celebrated documentary film Paris Is Burning (1991), Cassara's first novel dramatically re-creates the world of Harlem balls and the houses that revolve around them, focusing on the real-world House of Xtravaganza, the first Latino house in the ball scene. It's the 1980s and early '90s in New York, at the height of the AIDS epidemic, which will figure largely in this often-heartbreaking story of young people who support themselves by selling their bodies. Cassara has done a superb job of reimagining a world that will be foreign and even exotic to many readers, while creating fully developed characters to populate it. " (From Booklist)

One True Way by Shannon Hitchcock

Geared for grades 4-7, this book is about Allie, who has just moved "from New Jersey to a conservative North Carolina town, Allie Drake has two goals for her first day at Daniel Boone Middle School: make a friend and join the newspaper staff. She accomplishes both after meeting a girl named Sam, 'probably the friendliest person I'd ever met,' who introduces Allie to the newspaper's editor. She's instantly drawn to Sam (and the attraction is mutual), but Allie is afraid to confide in her mother. Setting her novel in the 1970s, Hitchcock (Ruby Lee & Me) sensitively explores the hurdles facing the girls' tentative romance, including the teachings of Sam's parents' church and the realization that the dismissal of their favorite teachers, a lesbian couple, doesn't bode well for their future together." (From Publisher's Weekly)

The Cosmopolitans by Sarah Schulman



"Style and setting allow some beauty to intrude on this story of love, loss, and how low one might stoop to right a wrong. Bette lives alone in Greenwich Village, stewing over her family's rejection and denial of a grave betrayal. Across the hall, Earl struggles to find work as an actor; in 1958, being black restricts his choices, and being gay means hiding even more of his desires. These two form a family of sorts as later middle age approaches, but when Bette's cousin Hortense enters their lives, the initial novelty festers into something grim." (From Kirkus Reviews)

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Ally in the Academy

By Trum Simmons

How natural is "Natural Law?"

First, some good news. This spring the U.S. Supreme Court declined to take up a challenge to the transgender bathroom policy approved in 2018 by the Boyertown Area School District, leaving students there the right to pee in peace.

Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg added gender identity and expression to our mission statement, which affirms that we welcome "friend and stranger alike into our diverse and inclusive family of faith regardless of worldly condition of any kind."

The statement already included sexual orientation, along with race, class and national origin, and those of us who wanted to add the new language had some educating to do. Talking about gender identity and expression is a difficult and challenging conversation to have with folks who haven't had much exposure to the LGBTQ community.

Now the bad news. The Trump administration continues to roll back the advances in transgender rights wherever it can. An especially troubling effort has left transgender people in the military in a very bad place, along with any transgender American who would be proud to join our armed forces.

Many people use the concept of "natural law" as the underpinning of their arguments against any changes to the longstanding dichotomies of male/female, gay/straight and all the others. I'd like to include right/wrong and good/sinful here as well.

Well, what is natural law, anyway? Thomas Jefferson and company thought the principle was the bedrock of the foundations of our country. All men are created equal, he wrote, and all enjoy certain inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. (The Declaration of Independence notes these particular unalienable rights are simply three of many others.)

These rights are endowed by their creator, he wrote, and come from "the laws of Nature and Nature's God." And there begins the debate, beginning with "Nature's God." What is the God of Nature—the one in the so-called Old Testament Bible? The New Testament Bible?

It's clear that many people who decry the concept of gender identity and expression are those who worship the God of the Book of Genesis in the Old Testament, and they have a very clear idea of just who/what that God is and just what kind of beings that God created.

Many Christian fundamentalists take literally the Genesis stories of how God created the earth and human beings (there actually are two accounts in Genesis. They also believe the earth was created in seven actual days and that the earth is not nearly as old as science tells us. Therefore, they believe in male and female and nothing else in between or beyond, and they believe that "natural law" is God's law.

Christian and other conservatives are using their view of natural law to fight against all the social justice initiatives LGBGTQ communities are advocating for. They also are using natural law in the abortion wars, because, according to them, natural law says a fetus is a person and therefore abortion is murder.

Natural law is being used as a cover for fundamentalist and evangelical believers who want God enshrined in our laws, and thus they are challenging the wall between church and state. They will strongly disagree, but I think this means they either don't believe in the First Amendment or simply don't understand it.

Back to the Garden of Eden. I wonder what kind of man Adam was. Do you think he was a "manly man," a "real man"? Was he a "girly man"? And what about Eve? Was she "all woman"? Was she Aretha Franklin's "natural woman"? What do those terms really mean?

In a country where cultural norms have established clear distinctions between what is and what isn't considered normal, gender identity and expression remain too complicated for people caught up in their own world view. As always, the answer is information and education. Enough of both will get us through today's arguments. At least I hope so.

Ellie's severe asthma attacks were triggered by secondhand smoke at work. She and her partner have to live with its effects forever. If you or someone you know wants free help to quit smoking, call **1-800-QUIT-NOW.**

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LGBT Center of Central PA

By Amanda Arbour

Strategies & leading with our values

Six months ago, we introduced the LGBT Center's new Vision, Mission, and Values and 2019-2021 Strategic Plan to our communities. This was the culmination of a year's worth of work gathering extensive community feedback and formulating that into something compelling and cohesive, and we were proud to share it with you.

However, our work did not stop there - that was really just the beginning, because these are not just glossy pages that sit on a shelf - these are living, breathing documents that guide our work daily, and so I want to give you a peek into what that looks like at the Center.

The purpose of a strategic plan is to intentionally align our efforts and our resources towards specific goals. There are many needs within our communities, and many directions that we could have taken with this, but the four areas that we chose to focus on were what came up over and over again in the community feedback - Community Building, Racial Justice, Mental Health, and Housing.

As an LGBTQ+ movement leader shared at a conference earlier this year, we cannot do everything and we cannot meet every need - we have limited time and resources, so we are making choices all the time about what to prioritize. The key to having a strategic plan is that it becomes the guide so that the choices we're making are strategic. That is our litmus test for whether to say yes or no to new partnerships, how to prioritize funds for existing programs, and when new programs are needed. It all must align with the plan in order to be a "yes".

A great example of this for us is Project Silk. If you haven't heard yet, the LGBT Center is partnering with UPMC Pinnacle, Valley Youth House, and Hamilton Health Center to open a youth drop-in space specifically for LGBTQ+ youth of color in Harrisburg, thanks to funding from the University of Pittsburgh. The Project Silk model is focused on HIV prevention and treatment in a recreational, youth-centered space with programming and wrap-around services. The priority communities for this program are queer men of color and trans women of color.

By the time the drop-in center opens, this project will have been a year in the making. In fact, we initially applied for the grant last August - the same month our Strategic Plan was approved by the Board. That is no coincidence. When this opportunity presented itself, we had our plan to guide us - and Project Silk fit perfectly with our goal and objectives around Racial Justice, building upon the strong youth programs we already had through Common Roads. So we said "yes" - and we're excited for you to learn more as we launch this program!

Accompanying the strategic plan was our new Vision, Mission, and Values, and even before we rolled them out we were having many conversations about what it means to lead with our values. What does it mean to truly value Safety when competing safety concerns are being shared with us? How do we engage each other with Dignity & Respect while still holding people accountable? What does Intersectionality & Inclusion look like when we are selecting staff and Board members? How do we foster true Collaboration that breaks us out of a scarcity mindset to see the possibilities for partnership?

As these conversations continued, we sought to make these concepts concrete. Every Board meeting starts with a Learning Community segment to better understand different aspects of our values and how they impact our work. Every staff meeting includes discussion on how to dismantle white supremacy in our organizational culture. We turn to our values to inform Board selection, hiring processes, community partnerships, funding needs, and program priorities. In everything we do, we are constantly asking "how does this align with our values?".

It can be difficult work, peeling back all of the layers of what we've been taught to start to discover a different way of doing things. Yet is it liberating, as we catch a glimpse of what might be possible if our "business as usual" is predicated on something radically different. What could happen if the most marginalized among us truly felt safe, respected, included, and collaborated with? How might that change our organizations and our communities?

As we continue to engage these questions around leading with our values and being strategic, we hope you will join us! We want to hear from you as we seek to put these intentions into action, and welcome your feedback and your participation. We are a community center, and we need everyone's involvement in order to accomplish our goals and embody our values.

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WHAT A DRAG

Maryland bars forced to cancel drag shows or potentially lose liquor licenses

The liquor board says they aren't telling the bars to cancel the drag shows, they're just warning them that it could possibly get them shut down for providing "adult entertainment" reports Bil Browning for LGBTQ Nation.

Several bars and restaurants in Harford County, Maryland have cancelled upcoming drag shows, claiming the local liquor board has intimidated them by insinuating they could lose their liquor licenses if they don't.

"I had to cancel, otherwise I could lose my liquor license. My liquor license is more worth it," Renato Buontempo, owner of the restaurant Main Street Tower told the Baltimore Sun. "They say to me, 'It's up to you,' then they say look at this [board rule] of things I'm not allowed to do. They left me no other choice."

At issue are the local laws governing "adult entertainment" in places that serve alcohol. Officials from the Harford County Liquor Control Board say they didn't tell the venues to shut down the shows, they merely reminded them about the regulations surrounding "sexual displays" and warned them of consequences.

"At a drag show, or any other live entertainment event, simulated sex acts and/or other behavior or attire that are prohibited by [board rules] could occur," board administrator Pilar Gracia said.

She cited a rule that prohibits fondling of breasts or buttocks, wearing clothing that exposes or simulates breasts, or simulating sex acts. Since drag shows are frequently bawdy affairs with plenty of sexual jokes and fake boobs, the meaning was clear.

"If they don't violate these things [in the board rules], the board doesn't need to be involved," board chairman Sheryl Davis Kohl told the Sun. "We're not telling them they can't do anything; we're making them aware of what the law says."

The newspaper described the convoluted regulation that could somehow turn a drag queen into an "adult entertainer" at the whim of an anti-gay inspector.

According to the board rule, an individual may not serve alcohol while being unclothed or in "attire, costume or clothing so as to expose to view any portion of the female breast" below the top of the areola or any portion of a person's lower private areas.

No one may "caress or fondle" certain body parts, including breasts and buttocks or use a device or covering that simulates certain body parts.

Entertainment that is prohibited includes performing an act of or that simulates, sexual intercourse or any number of other acts, caressing or fondling certain parts of the body, displaying certain parts of the body or allowing an entertainer "whose breasts or buttocks are exposed to perform closer than 6 feet from the nearest patron."

With few exceptions, according to the board rule, "the board shall revoke a license if, after hearing before the board, an activity listed in this section is found to have occurred on the license premises."

The paper points out one business that will continue to host a drag brunch by using a loophole to avoid the restrictive local regulations.

MacGregor's in Havre de Grace has two licenses it uses for catering. One is from the local board and the other is a less restrictive state license. They will host the drag brunch under the state license.

the
Central Voice

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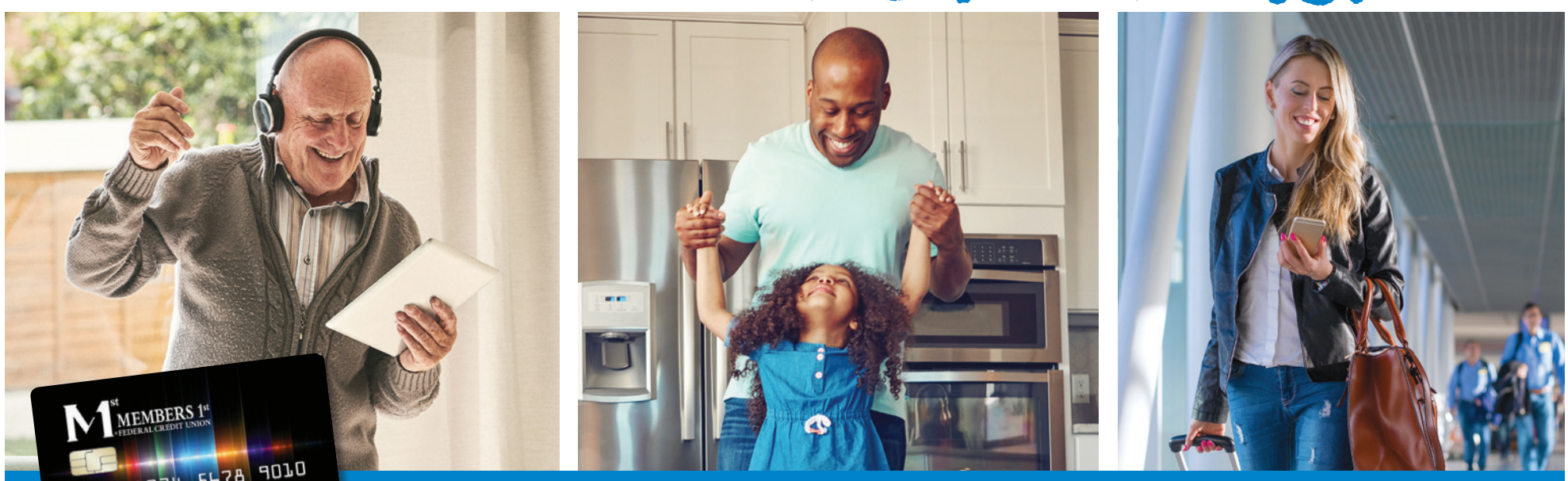

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VIOLENT ATTACKS DOUBLED

Daughter of Holocaust survivors educates others

By Frank Pizzoli

"My work involves engaging people in the lessons learned from the Holocaust," Lillian Rappaport, 68, tells Central Voice.

She is the daughter of Holocaust survivors. Polish Jews sent to concentration camps, her parents were finally released in 1945. They met at a Displaced Persons Camp and married. By 1949 they were relocated to Harrisburg through the efforts of the local Jewish community.

"A train ticket, an apartment, and a job paying $20 a week as a tailor," Rappaport says with pride in her voice.

Since 1995, Rappaport has served as the Jewish Education Director at the Jewish Federation of Greater Harrisburg. She currently focuses on Holocaust Education.

"Certainly the history of the Holocaust is important, what happened, where and when and to whom," Rappaport explains. "I also focus on what we can all learn from what happened. How it applies to today's world," she says.

Do recent events make imperative a renewed emphasis on Holocaust education?

"These are very scary times," Rappaport says.

Violent attacks in the US against the Jewish community doubled last year, according to a late April report issued by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). Overall attacks that also included vandalism and harassment remained near record-high levels.

ADL is a Jewish civil rights group. Their recent report counted 39 cases of physical assaults involving 59 victims in 2018, up from 19 assaults and 21 victims in 2017. The 2018 tally includes 11 people who were killed and two congregants wounded when a gunman opened fire at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh in October -- the deadliest attack on Jews in the nation›s history.

In addition to that shooting, 2018 "saw high levels of white supremacist activity, including propaganda on college campuses and in communities, and hateful robocalls aimed at voters," the ADL said.

"I think 'hate' is attractive to our lost souls," Rappaport says. She counts among those lost souls the "many white, uneducated, Christian men, angry at everyone not like them."

That said, Rappaport also points out that "hate or the potential for hate lives in all of us" and believes that educational mission can defuse deeply held feelings of fear of others who are different.

Xenophobia is a dangerous trend and it seems to be rising worldwide, Rappaport observes. She asks in her educational sessions What responsibility do we have to one another? What kind of community do we want for ourselves and our children?

"Unless we address questions like this, we will not have communities and neighborhoods that come together, in spite of what makes them different. Coming together is what makes us all human," Rappaport says.

INFO - l.rappaport@jewishfedhbg.org

Who is Lillian Rappaport?

Lillian Rappaport is a native of Harrisburg, PA and is a graduate of the Rabbi David L. Silver Yeshiva Academy and Susquehanna Township High School. Her Bachelor of Arts degree, with majors in French and Spanish and minor in Hebrew, is from the University of Pittsburgh. She holds a Master of Arts in Education from New York University as well as a Master of Arts in Religious Education from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. She has done both undergraduate and graduate work at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In 2010, she received an honorary doctorate from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

Lillian began serving as the Educational Director of Temple Ohev Sholom in 1994. Since 1995, Lillian has served as the Jewish Education Director at the Jewish Federation of Greater Harrisburg. Her responsibilities at the federation include directing its resource center, Hebrew High School, and Holocaust educational programming. It is her honor and pleasure to have served as a volunteer teacher at the Silver Academy for the past 13 years, teaching middle school French, Spanish and Holocaust Studies.

Two Pennsylvania centers join suit against Trump administration to block 'Denial of Care' rule

Case filed with Santa Clara County to protect patients from discrimination and loss of medical services

By The Central Voice

Fourteen parties filed suit May 28 challenging the "Denial of Care" Rule issued earlier this month by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The controversial rule allows health care workers – doctors, nurses, EMTs, administrators and clerical staff – to deny medical treatment and services to patients because of personal religious or moral beliefs. Health care facilities that do not comply risk losing federal funding.

"The problem for many regions of the second largest state – including Harrisburg-Lancaster-York and Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton - is that if too many health care providers and institutions decide to deny care there will be even fewer places for the LGBT community and women seeking reproductive services and abortion services to go," Adrian Shanker tells *The Central Voice*. Shanker is executive director, Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center, located in Allentown.

The controversial rule allows health care workers to deny medical treatment and services to patients because of personal religious or moral beliefs.

The Allentown center and Philadelphia's Mazzoni Center are two of 14 plaintiffs involved in the legal challenge. In all, there are five doctors, eight organizations, and one county. The county is California's Santa Clara County, that state's second largest provider of public health care. The lawsuit (County of Santa Clara vs. HHS) was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

The new regulation invites health care workers – doctors, nurses, EMTs, administrators and clerical staff – to deny medical treatment and services to patients because of personal religious or moral beliefs. A news release from the 14 plaintiffs states: "The regulation will cause mass confusion among health care providers and is completely infeasible to implement. As a result, health care facilities may do away with reproductive and LGBTQ services altogether, leaving millions without access to critical health care."

Regarding access to care, Shanker, whose center coordinates a biannual survey in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Health and Human Services Department, tells Central Voice "We already know from surveys that 50% of LGBT respondents are afraid to approach health care professionals for fear of rejection or discrimination."

For transgender survey respondents, the numbers are worse.

Shanker says, "75% of the trans people who answered our survey have those same fears."

"Like all Americans, LGBT people deserve high-quality health care. Unfortunately, the LGBT community experiences challenges when it comes to accessing high-quality health care, leading to significant health disparities and worsened health outcomes," Shanker points out.

In nearby Washington, DC, Whitman-Walker Health CEO Naseema Safi says, "We at Whitman-Walker Health stand for dignity, affirmation and respect in healthcare." She notes that "The language within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 'Denial-of-Care' rule has left us with only one clear option, and that was to advocate for access to health care. This is not a new position for Whitman-Walker. This is, in fact, the kind of discrimination that led to our founding."

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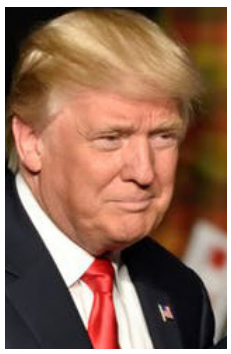
Trump against LGBT protections law



Trump

A spokesperson for the White House has said that Donald Trump opposes the Equality Act reports Alex Bollinger for LGBTQ Nation. May 17 the US House of Representatives passed the Equality Act, the first time a chamber of Congress has approved a comprehensive measure. The crucially important, bipartisan legislation will finally provide clear, comprehensive non-discrimination protections for queer people across the country in employment, housing, public spaces, education, jury services, credit and federal funding.

"The Trump administration absolutely opposes discrimination of any kind and supports the equal treatment of all; however, this bill in its current form is filled with poison pills that threaten to undermine parental and conscience rights," a senior administration official told the *Washington Blade*.

The Equality Act would add sexual orientation and gender identity to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other civil rights legislation as protected categories, effectively banning job, housing, credit, and other forms of discrimination against LGBTQ people at the federal level.

The White House spokesperson did not say what threats there were to "parental and conscience rights" in the bill.

The "conscience rights" may refer to how Republicans believe that many forms of discrimination are justified if the person discriminating says their religion made them do it.

Earlier this month, Trump announced new guidelines that would allow health care professionals to refuse to provide medical care if they have personal or religious objections to it, which Trump framed as "conscience rights."

LGBTQ organizations denounced Trump's opposition to the Equality Act.

"We're disgusted, but certainly not surprised, by Donald Trump's announcement that he opposes the Equality Act, which is supported by seven in ten Americans and more than two hundred major businesses," said Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin.

"By opposing this common sense civil rights legislation, Donald Trump is ensuring that LGBTQ people remain at risk of being fired or denied housing in a majority of states," the ACLU said in a statement.

"Thankfully, most Americans disagree with President Trump and believe that our nation's nondiscrimination laws should explicitly cover LGBTQ people, too."

Trump's views on the Equality Act have changed in the last several decades. In a 2000 interview with The Advocate, he said, "I like the idea of amending the 1964 Civil Rights Act to include a ban of discrimination based on sexual orientation. It would be simple. It would be straightforward."

"We don't need to rewrite the laws currently on the books, although I do think we need to address hate-crimes legislation. But amending the Civil Rights Act would grant the same protection to gay people that we give to other Americans — it's only fair."

House Democratic leadership is planning to hold a vote on the Equality Act this coming Friday. The bill faces an uphill battle in the Senate.

Openly gay PA State Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, 181st District, speaking about the lack of basic civil rights protections for LGBT taxpayers.

PROTECTION from page 5

182nd District, said that he drives through "four zones getting from home to his seat in the General Assembly. In two, I have protections. In two I do not. I have protections depending on where I stop my car. I think we've had enough."

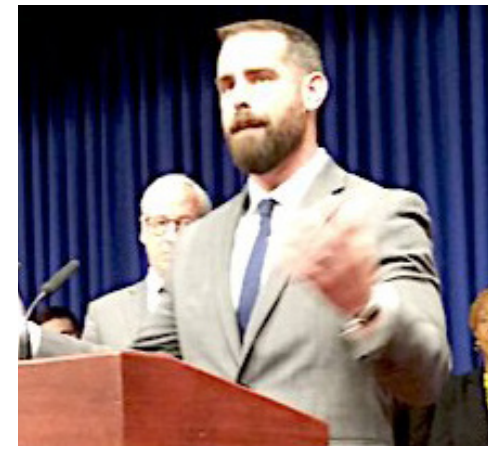
"It's unacceptable that today, there are Pennsylvanians who must be afraid that they'll lose their job or home simply because of who they are. As some of my colleagues have been advocating for this legislation for the past 20 years, it's time we get serious about it. It's literally lifesaving," Sims said.

"Imagine that we're catching up with Kentucky," Sims told *The Central Voice*. Pennsylvania is the only Northeastern state without basic civil rights for LGBT individuals. The issue is now before the US Supreme Court. "Will be do the right thing or wait for the US Supreme Court to it for us?" he challenged his legislative colleagues.

Bills in various forms with various language have been introduced in the General Assembly since 2011. None have ever been brought up for a vote. Although different, they all contained language that focused on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

The recent study found 78% of Pennsylvanians are in support of updating the current Human Relations Act to include protections for gay and transgender people.

According to Freedom for All Americans, more than 500 businesses in Pennsylvania support an update to Pennsylvania law to fully protect LGBT people.



Brian Sims, an openly gay PA State Rep. from the 182nd District, addressing the urgent need for LGBT protections.

PA YOUTH CONGRESS INVOLVED

Supreme Court allows positive trans ruling to stand

By The Central Voice

The Supreme Court on May 27 left in place a lower court ruling made a year ago in favor of Boyertown School district's policy allowing transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that match their gender identity.

Goodman

Based in Harrisburg, PA Youth Congress participated in the case with the school district and transgender students within the school.

"We're absolutely thrilled that the Supreme Court chose not to review the case," PA Youth Congress founder and executive director Jason Landau Goodman told *The Central Voice* following announcement of the court's decision.

The case arose when six Boyertown students said the transgender-inclusive policy violated their privacy rights and constituted sexual harassment in violation of Title IX, a federal law that bars discrimination based on sex in educational institutions that receive federal funds. The high court let the lower court's decision stand without also issuing any comment.

In court papers, lawyers for the plaintiffs – Pennsylvania Family Institute and their affiliated Independent Law Center - argued that "forcing a teenager to share a locker room or restroom with a member of the opposite sex can cause embarrassment and distress."

Lawyers for the school district said they decided to allow transgender students to use facilities that aligned with their gender identity because the district "Believes that transgender students should have the right to use school bathroom and locker facilities on the same basis as non-transgender students."

Goodman told CV, "The high court's decision is a bell weather to other Pennsylvania school districts who now know that should they pass similar policies, and those policies are challenged in court, the challengers are likely to lose."

Under the Obama administration the departments of Education and Justice issued guidance to school districts that recommended that schools allow transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that matched their gender identity.

But the Trump administration withdrew that guidance. Guidance is just that – a suggested guide – and not a law or a regulation with the force of law.

"This is a positive ending," Goodman said.

RESOURCE CENTER from page 19

What Waid also notes, "We don't have is a way to easily tap into those resources if you don't know where to find them. Welcoming faith communities or informed medical care providers are important for quality of life. A safe space for small groups to meet makes their work much easier."

Christopher-Waid hopes the center can address that communication and resource gap and said that the response has been immediate and powerful since their soft opening in April.

"We are not even officially open yet and we have had meetings or trainings with the York City Health Department, Planned Parenthood, Wellspan, Diakon Adoption and Foster Care, and more. There is a real desire for collaboration and understanding and growth in the York County community."

Although Equality Fest is the sponsoring organization for the York center, its board consists of leaders from groups like Spectrum Young Adult Group, PFLAG York, and several local faith communities.

INFO - equalityfestyork.com or equalityfestyork@gmail.com

ALLIES from page 1

While Shineman freely acknowledges that he cannot say what it means to be queer, and that his experiences are not comparable to the discrimination facing many LGBTQ+ individuals, he learned how to use his privilege as a platform to center and raise up the voices of the queer community.

"The first step is not to speak for LGBTQ+ individuals, but to speak with them. Not to tell them how to speak for themselves, but to offer them aid in finding and sharing their voices."

As an example of what he means, Shineman uses his privilege to raise up the voices of the LGBTQ+ community by silencing the noise of discrimination so that they may be heard and may feel safe.

"As a Unitarian Universalist, my faith teaches me to seek justice and promote equity and compassion in all human relations," Shineman explains. Being an ally "does not ask me to sacrifice my privilege. It does not take away anything from me, but challenges me to use my experiences and voice to bring all up to the same standard, to center the voices of the marginalized."

Mindy Waltemyer

As a mother of a teenage transgender son, Mindy Waltemyer, has a more personal investment in being an ally to the LGBTQ+ community - to protect her child.

She recently spoke at the Central York School Board public meetings which debated whether or not the school district's anti-discrimination policy should be expanded to include "Gender Identity." When the school directors finally approved the measure to expand the policy, Waltmyer felt equal relief and exhaustion. There had been heated debate on both sides of the argument.

During the two meetings, the basis for many arguments against the expanded language came from religious voices, which is something that Waltemyer has witnessed before.

When the church Waltemyer was raised and baptized in voted not to support a close friend who had recently come out publicly, she saw rejection first-hand. Her response was to mirror rejection right back at the organization. In solidarity with a friend, she left the church.

With the more recent school board public discussions, and a transgender son in the picture, Waltemyer found herself reflecting. She was happy it succeeded in the end, but was disappointed that the vote was not unanimous. She was also not happy that those against expanding the policy, she thought, hid behind a narrow religious perspective while ignoring the basis of the Christian faith - to love one another.

For Waltemyer, being an ally means being willing to speak up against the public bashing and shaming aimed at the LGBTQ+ community.

"I try to be a safe place for queer youths, a judge-free zone," she says. "I believe that every parent has a high responsibility to their child, and should ensure that they are treated well and fairly. So I become a 'mama bear' for queer youths without supportive families." That is the reason for the safety pin tattoo on the inside of her right wrist - to signify that she is a safe person to whom queer youth can speak.

Finnea Wagaman

There are times when we as LGBTQ+ individuals only see our value and our beauty through our allies.

For Finnea Wagaman, her journey began with a visit to her psychiatrist. She asked to "be fixed." She didn't want to express the feelings she had felt since her childhood - of being in the wrong body. She also didn't want to break up her family and was concerned for her ten-year-old daughter.

It was her therapist who had to convince her that there was nothing broken about her, and that she did not need fixing. What she needed was to accept herself.

"Prior to my transition, I found my greatest allies in my medical and mental health care professionals," Wagaman says.

She also found support in her workplace. Wagaman's Human Resource department brought in her therapist to give employees a presentation on gender transition followed by questions and discussion. Throughout her transition, she attended different transgender support groups in Harrisburg and King of Prussia and found strength and affirmation from within the transgender community.

Once she had completed her medical transition, Wagaman helped others just beginning their journeys by promoting education within her community. A significant experience for Wagaman is that she eventually dropped out from many of her support groups. "I found that I kept most of the friends who had shared outside interests while losing connection with those who I only shared transitioning with," Wagaman explains.

Her hope is that one day the whole idea of LGBTQ+ individuals, and especially the 'T', will be a non-issue within our society, which she currently sees as very restrictive. With her now young adult daughter as her biggest advocate, Wagaman believes that it is the older generation, people in their fifties and older, that are holding society back.

Even so, Wagaman lives as her authentic self with no apologies to anyone - a true woman whether she takes the time to put on makeup or to feminize her voice or not.

"I live by the mantra 'To hell with you, this is me - love me or go away'."

The LGBTQ+ community has made gains, in part, because of our allies. While we rely mostly on ourselves and our queer siblings, we cannot walk this path alone. While we do not need the hetero, cis-gendered society to speak for us, we do need them to listen, understand, and help us continue thriving and succeeding in creating a world where love and personal identity in all forms flourishes.

Are you a victim or a victor?

Making Sense of Life

By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen

Have you ever felt victimized? You may have been taken advantage of by someone you trusted, felt cheated out of an opportunity, or perhaps physically harmed in some way.

Unfortunately, at least one of these possible scenarios may seem all too familiar to you. Much of what happens in our lives is a direct result of our choices, though more often than not with most people, the choices are unconscious ones.

There's another area that brings up the situation of looking like a victim. Scripture tells us that "time and unforeseen circumstances befall us all." We all know that in spite of our best plans and actions, shit happens.

Right now in the world there are events occurring to concern or infuriate us perhaps more than any time in the past. Dwelling on the tragedies may cause us to fear the unknown to such an extent that it stops us from even leaving our homes without anxiety.

In spite of the unthinkable situations in the news, we've also repeatedly heard of communities which have been the target of a terrorist attack and have healed through their own tenacity. These people do not stop living their lives and refuse to live in fear. They continue to hold onto the ideals that define them individually and collectively.

It's in group and person situations like these that we choose being the victor over being the victim. Even if we don't have a clue how to move forward after a community, family, or personal challenge has occurred, the very fact that we are willing to get up the next morning and go about our life shows we possess the power to continue living, and to heal.

If you have moments of despair due to world or local conditions, immediately start to do something small to change your perception. One way is to stop the constant flow of news reports – often conflicting – flowing through your mobile device.

A 2017 study of high school students looked at how well the kids did solving math problems with their phones on their desks; their phones in their bags or pockets; or, putting the device in another room (Edutopia.com, 2018). Even if the students in the first two groups couldn't hear their phones beeping or pinging, "the phone exerted a powerful influence, occupying mental space, even as they ignored it." The best test scores were in the group where the phone was no where to be seen or heard.

The study goes on to report that just having our devices in our presence "might be triggering automatic attention," a part of our brain "that unconsciously monitors for signs of critical importance." What this does is create a "persistent sense of urgency."

Our phones are stressing us out. After millennia of being aware of what's right in front of us, we are suddenly requiring our brains to be attentive to … well … everything … all the time. The more we hear the worse we feel. This leads to a sense of despair, as there seems to be nothing we can do about much of anything. This feeling leaves of victimized, powerless, and without hope.

Decide what YOU want out of life, instead of being engrossed, as it's so easy to do on social media and with the "tragedies" of others. Seriously, compared to world peace or your primary relationship, do you really give a rip about his broken fingernail or the fact that the barista misspelled her name on the latté cup?

Don't let the media and the "sky is falling" mentality stop you from living. The uninformed and uneducated will continue to freak out; and, there are plenty of people who purposely attempt to mislead us for their own gain. Stand up for what you believe in. Refuse to set aside your principles, ethics, and morals. BE the type of person you say others should be.

I'm committed to stop blaming my problems on the actions or inactions of others. Will you join me in being a victor? Together, we CAN make the changes we see need to be made.

Terry is speaker and award-winning author - find his books on Amazon. Read his weekly blog at Central Voice online or on his website at: blog.terry-drewkaranen.com

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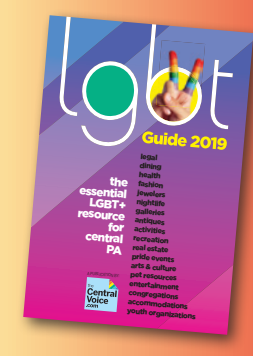
CENTRAL PA'S ONLY LGBT DIRECTORY



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ICING ON THE CAKE?

‘Hookers’ turned gay man straight with ‘anointed cake’

Lance Wallnau
(FACEBOOK)

A Dallas evangelist told his followers that an “anointed cake” baked by “hookers” turned a gay man straight reports Liz Farmer for *The Dallas News*.

The evangelist, Lance Wallnau, bills himself as a Christian consultant whose website says he helped get President Donald Trump elected with his book *God’s Chaos Candidate*.

Wallnau has made a career out of his pronouncements, which have earned him more than 200,000 Facebook followers.

One of Wallnau’s most recent claims came about when he live-streamed a video on Periscope in which he asked viewers for their prayer requests. One person asked for deliverance for her “homosexual” son.

That’s when Wallnau launched into a rambling story he said he heard involving baking skills that helped deliver a “gay and very adamantly anti-Christian” bar owner.

“This is crazy,” he said. “Now, I’m not saying this is going to work for you. But some hookers in his bar got saved.”

First, a regular at the bar supposedly saved the prostitutes. Later, they whipped up a cake, which the reformed prostitutes prayed over.

“It was an anointed cake, and they made the cake and gave the cake as a gift,” Wallnau said. “I know this is strange.”

The bar owner took a bite and then boom: The power of God hit him, Wallnau said.

Things escalated very quickly from there.

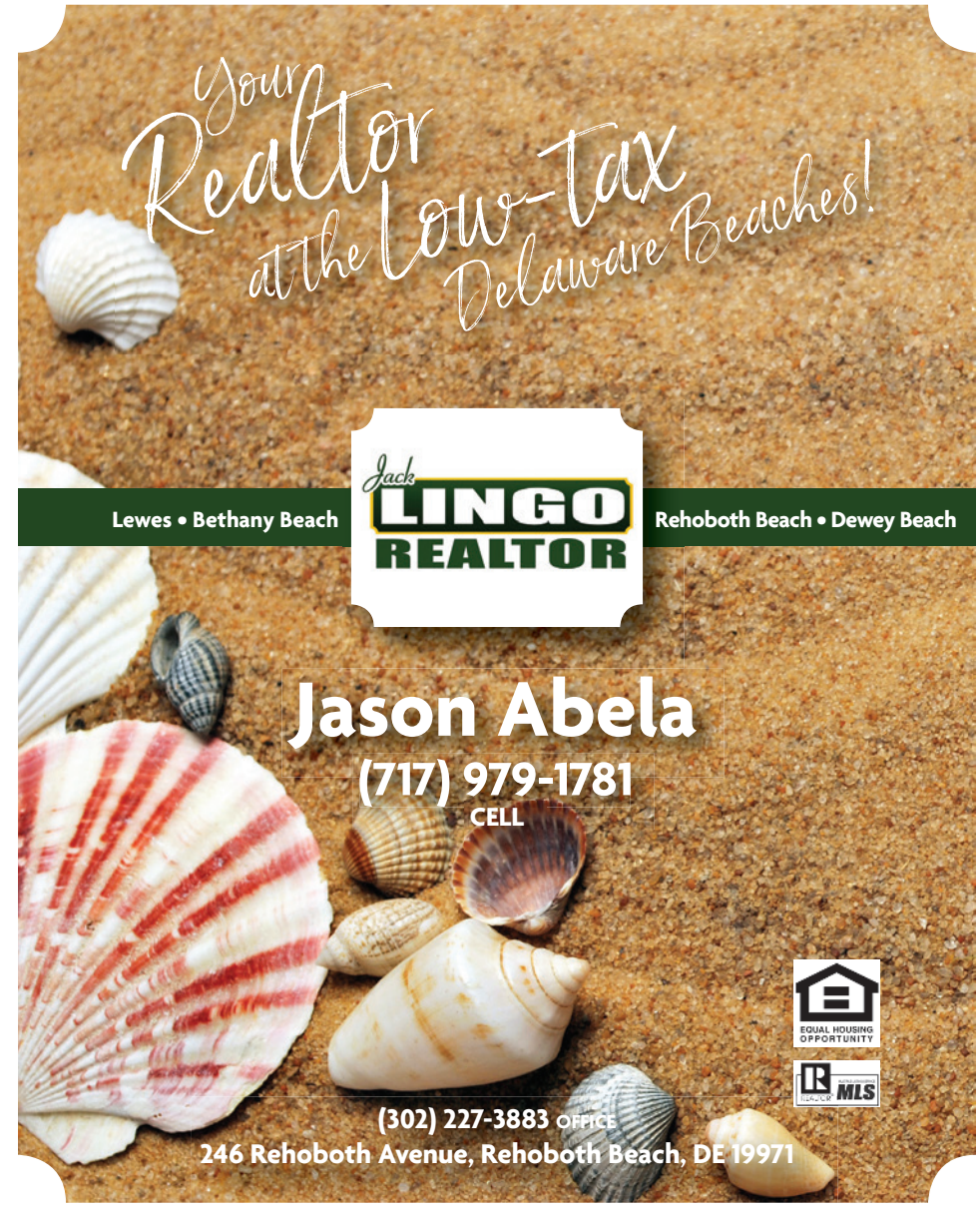
The regular at the bar — who shepherded the domino effect of conversions — allegedly led the bar owner to the Lord and baptized him.

“When he gets baptized, the guy gets delivered and the spirit that was working him got broken off,” Wallnau said, insinuating that the bar owner was no longer gay. “I’m telling you, it’s a story.”

In response to coverage of the cake story, Wallnau posted another video.

“Liberals are crazy,” he said. “... [They] will look for any dangling participle of political impropriety and then fasten upon it with a zeal of an anaconda and then begin to squeeze the life out of you.”

Last month, he said Trump’s win was a “manifestation of an enraged demon through the populace” after the “deliverance of the nation from the spirit of witchcraft in the Oval Office,” according to cnsnews.com, a conservative website.



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